

Message Text

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PAGE 01 CAIRO 06318 272007Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 TRSE-00 /062 W
-----054102 280239Z /75

R 271956Z FEB 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6055
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR EG XF
SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN RELATIONS WITH PALESTINIANS

SUMMARY. EDITORIALISTS REFLECT EGYPTIAN AMBIVALENCE
TOWARD PALESTINIANS. OFFICIALLY GOE INSISTS COMMITMENT
TO PALESTINIAN RIGHTS REMAINS, BUT INDIVIDUAL PLO LEADERS
ARE UNDER ATTACK, PARTICULARLY ARAFAT. AS RESULT CYPRUS
INCIDENTS, PUBLIC ANGER WITH PALESTINIANS IS CONSIDERABLY
GREATER. END SUMMARY.

1. TWO EDITORIALS IN FEBRUARY 27 CAIRO DAILIES ILLUSTRATE
CURRENT AMBIVALENT EGYPTIAN ATTITUDES TOWARD PALESTINIANS
IN WAKE OF RECENT EVENTS IN CYPRUS. AHRAH EDITORIAL,
ENTITLED "THOSE WHO MISUNDERSTAND", MAINTAINS THAT
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PAGE 02 CAIRO 06318 272007Z

PALESTINIAN CAUSE REMAINS BULWARK OF EGYPTIAN POLICY,
WITHOUT REGARD TO "DEVIATIONS" COMMITTED BY PLO LEADER-
SHIP OR ACTIONS OF SPLINTER GROUPS. EGYPTIAN POLICY
NOT "PRISONER OF COINCIDENCE" AND NOT PREY TO EMOTIONAL-
ISM: CLEAR EGYPTIAN VISION AND CAPACITY FOR TOLERANCE
KEEP POLICIES ON COURSE, DESPITE FACT THAT GOE MUST
OCCASIONALLY WRITE OFF SOME PALESTINIAN LEADERS WHO GO

TOO FAR IN ATTACKING EGYPT. RECENT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN
SADAT AND ATHERTON MAKE EGYPTIAN COMMITMENT TO PALESTINI-
AN RIGHTS CLEAR.

2. ON OTHER HAND, MUSA SABRI OF AKHBAR, NOTING THAT HE
HAS BEEN ROUSED FROM HIS SICK BED BY PROVOCATIVE STATE-
MENTS BY ARAFAT, DELIVERS BLISTERING AD HOMINEM ATTACK
ON PLO CHAIRMAN ENTITLED: "YOU ARE LOST, ARAFAT*" SABRI
PROFESSES HIMSELF AT A LOSS TO UNDERSTAND WHAT HAS BEFALLEN
ARAFAT, "SINCE WE USED TO RECEIVE HIM WARMLY IN EGYPT AND
TREAT HIM AS A CHIEF OF STATE". EGYPT FORGAVE ARAFAT FOR
HIS OPPOSITION TO SINAI II AND EVEN FOR SIGNING TRIPOLI
DECLARATION, BUT NOW ARAFAT, BROUGHT UP IN MIDST OF
EGYPTIAN PEOPLE, "LOOKS AT US AS A STRANGER WHO HAS JUST
ARRIVED FROM SIBERIA". DOES ARAFAT HAVE DIFFERENT CONCEP-
TION OF PALESTINIAN RIGHTS THAN THAT VOICED BY SADAT IN
KNESSET? DOES USSR, WHICH WISHES TO PENSLAVE YOU FOR ITS
OWN ENDS", HAVE DIFFERENT INTERPRETATION OF PALESTINIAN
RIGHTS?"

3. COMMENT: OFFICIAL GOE LINE CLEARLY REFLECTED IN AHAM
EDITORIAL, BUT IN FACE OF CONTINUED SNIPING AT EGYPT
AND SOME PLO LEADERS, SUSPICIONS OF PLO INVOLVEMENT IN
BOTH SIBAI ASSASSINATION AND LARNACA SHOOT-OUT, EGYPTIAN
ATTACKS LIKELY CONTINUE. PUBLIC ANGER WITH PLO IS, IN
OUR VIEW, CONSIDERABLY GREATER THAN OFFICIAL PUBLIC
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PAGE 03 CAIRO 06318 272007Z

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